

## AFFORDABLE LEGAL SERVICES

**HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 18, 1995*

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation to reinstate the limited tax exclusion for employer provided group legal services.

This measure would reinstate section 120 of the Internal Revenue Code, under which many middle-class Americans could afford legal services. If enacted, this bill would encourage employers to provide preventive and affordable legal services to their employees by excluding their \$70 per year in contributions to a qualified legal services plan.

Since section 120 was first enacted in 1976, both employers and employees have benefited from it. It helped employees, who were able to resolve their legal problems quickly and avoid costly legal bills. It also helped businesses because employees were not distracted from work because of personal legal difficulties. The provision has proved to be so successful that Congress extended it seven times before it expired in 1992.

I believe it is imperative to support this legislation which promotes family unity by encouraging people to seek legal help while they still have some options. The goal of this bill is to help those middle-class Americans who don't have access to quality and affordable legal representation.

I respectfully request your support of this bill.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 18, 1995*

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent on official business on Tuesday, January 17, 1995, for rollcall vote No. 190. Had I been present on the House floor I would have cast my vote as follows:

Roll No. 190: "Yea" on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S.2., the Congressional Accountability Act, to make certain laws applicable to the legislative branch of the Federal Government.

CARIBBEAN BASIN ECONOMIC  
SECURITY ACT**HON. PHILIP M. CRANE**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 18, 1995*

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Caribbean Basin Economic Security Act. This bill would grant tariff treatment equivalent to that accorded to members of the North American Free-Trade Agreement [NAFTA], to Caribbean Basin beneficiary countries, for a 6-year period, pending their accession to NAFTA.

This bill would also direct the USTR to meet on a regular basis with trade ministers of countries in the Caribbean to discuss the likely

timing and possible procedures for initiating negotiations for beneficiary countries to accede to NAFTA.

Finally, as a way to encourage the administration to give a high priority to expanding trade with the Caribbean, the bill requires annual reports to Congress which: One, assess progress toward economic development and market oriented reforms in the Caribbean, and; two, analyze beneficiary countries with respect to their ability to undertake the trade obligations of NAFTA.

First proposed by the Reagan administration in 1982 and passed by the Congress in 1983, the Caribbean Basin Initiative [CBI] program is based on the understanding that the United States has a special responsibility to help the small, poorer economies which are our neighbors in the hemisphere. Because of the Caribbean's close proximity to the United States, Congress agreed, on a bipartisan basis, that it was in the best interest of the United States to encourage the development of strong democratic governments and healthy economies in these countries, through the expansion of trade.

Made permanent in 1990, the Caribbean Basin Initiative extends duty-free treatment to a wide-range of products imported from beneficiary countries. The program has served as a text-book example of the job-creating effects of promoting increased trade. As a result of the CBI, thousands of new jobs were created in the Caribbean. Even more remarkable was the increase in U.S. exports to the region during the life of the CBI program. They grew from \$5.8 billion in 1983 to \$12.3 billion in 1993. This represents a 112 percent increase, a rate three times the growth rate of U.S. exports to the world.

The legislation I am introducing today would ensure that the value of the U.S. commitment to the Caribbean contained in the CBI is not eroded over time. An unfortunate result of the passage of the NAFTA, enacted in 1993, is that some investment is being diverted from the Caribbean to Mexico.

This bill is designed to remedy the negative effects of NAFTA on the Caribbean by putting these countries on a clearer path toward eventually assuming the reciprocal trade obligations of NAFTA. For that to take place, the USTR must meet regularly in ministerial meetings with these countries in order to analyze and assess how they can best reform their economies in preparation for NAFTA membership. For some of the poorest countries, especially those in the Eastern Caribbean, this will require strong leadership from the United States, and longer transition periods during which NAFTA obligations can be phased in.

I am aware that the administration and possibly some U.S. industries will have concerns regarding the unilateral nature of the trade benefits in this bill. To them I would emphasize that the unilateral benefit in my bill is for a temporary period of 6 years so as to give these small economies time to develop and to undertake structural reforms.

I believe it is important that we start with the goal of achieving full NAFTA accession for CBI countries, because the standards of NAFTA, I believe, represent clear guide posts for charting trade expansion in the Western Hemisphere. My bill would allow for the negotiation of separate bilateral free-trade agreements, if necessary.

In my view, USTA should work with Canada and Mexico to ensure that CBI countries can be early partners with NAFTA members in the upcoming negotiations aimed at establishing the Free-Trade Agreement of the Americas [FTAA], announced at the recent Summit of Americas meeting in Miami.

As followup to the Summit of the Americas, the administration will be working to negotiate the accession of Chile to NAFTA this year. I believe it is equally important to work out a consensus with countries in the Caribbean regarding a procedure for expanding NAFTA which will include them. The Ways and Means Committee plans to consult closely with the administration in the coming weeks to achieve this goal.

Having been considered during approval of the NAFTA and Uruguay round implementing bills, NAFTA parity legislation represents unfinished business from the 103d Congress. It is my intention to seek swift approval of this bill by the Trade Subcommittee as soon the Contract With America schedule will permit.

CONGRATULATIONS TO  
GOLDTHWAITE HIGH SCHOOL  
STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS**HON. CHET EDWARDS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 18, 1995*

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize a group of individuals, a team, whose strive for sportsmanship and fairness in scholastic sports have made them champions, not only in their game, but in their daily lives as well.

I extend my sincere congratulations to the Goldthwaite High School Eagles of Goldthwaite, TX, who captured the 1994 Class 2A State Championship on December 17, 1994 at Memorial Stadium in Austin. Exacting revenge on the team that defeated them for the 1992 State title, the Eagles defeated the Schulenburg High School Shorthorns, 20-16, taking their second consecutive State championship and third in less than 10 years.

This achievement could not have been possible if not for the support of the student body and parents of Goldthwaite. This victory also, if not more so, comes through the dedication of coach Gary Proffitt and his staff. They, too, must be congratulated for the role they took in shaping the lives of these winners, winners who by accepting this victory also accept a responsibility to be victorious throughout their lives and give back to their communities.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing and honoring the players, coaches, students, and parents of Goldthwaite, TX.

INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE SECURITIES  
LITIGATION REFORM ACT  
OF 1995**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 18, 1995*

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation which would reform securities fraud litigation in order to curb frivolous